Irrigation Canals in the Uinta Basin,
Ouray Park Canal
Duchesne Vicinity
Duchesne County
Utah

HAER No. UT-30-B

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location:	Sections 23, 25-26, 35, T.1S., R.1E.; Sections 30-31, T.1S., R.2E.; Sections 16-17, 20-21, 23, 26, 28-29, 33, 5, T.2S, R.19E; Sections 6-7, 18, 22, 28, T.2S., R. 2E.; Sections 25-26, 36, T.6S., R. 19E.; Section 1, T.7S., R.19E.; Sections 6-8, 15-16, 22, R.7S., R. 20 E., Cities of LaPoint, Gusher and Randlett, Uintah County, Utah Quad: LaPoint, Ft. Duchesne, Vernal S. W., Pelican Lake
Date of Construction:	1920
Present Owner:	Colorado Park Irrigation
Original Use:	Irrigation Canal
Present Use:	Irrigation Canal
Significance:	The Ouray Park Canal is one of the largest canals in the Uinta Basin, both in terms of volume and overall length. Correspondingly, it has had one of the largest impacts upon the agricultural developments of the Uinta Basin. The canal served both white and Indian water and has been operated under joint cooperative ownership. Furthermore, the Ouray Park Canal lives up to its name as large segments of the waterway are extremely picturesque. The canal exhibits a number of significant engineering features and provides a source of recreational use.
Inventoried by:	James Jurale, David Stalheim, Craig Fuller National Park Service July 1983

DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY

On August 18, 1908, the Colorado Park Irrigation Company filed for and received the right to divert 42 cfs from the Uinta River. The point of diversion was from the southwest corner of Section 23, T. S., R. 1 E. Work on the canal began almost immediately, but because of the poor financial conditions of the irrigation company--due in part to the extreme droughts of 1918 and 1919 which prevented the farmers from paying their allotment fees, the canal was not completed until 1920. The finished product measured 153,120 feet long, 38 feet wide at the top, 30 feet wide at the bottom and 4 feet deep. In addition to a rock and brush diversion dam and a wooden headgate, the canal system included four flumes, 10 bridges and 17 lateral gates. On October 19, 1922, the Indian Irrigation Service filed for 6.13 cfs from the Uinta to be carried through the Colorado Park Canal. On the basis of this information, we can assume that after 1922 the canal carried both white and Indian water. In 1937, the Ouray Valley Irrigation Company merged with the Colorado Park Irrigation Company. The new company took the name Ouray Park Irrigation Company. The change in the name of the canal from Colorado Park to Ouray Park most likely occurred at the same time. The existing headworks of the Ouray Park Canal were constructed in 1948. Water flow is regulated by twin screw headgates which work in conjunction with a radial diversion panel. The canal runs for a total of 16 miles and includes a number of significant structures. The section of canal just south of Cottonwood Reservoir is particularly noteworthy for its scenic beauty. The canal resembles a mountain trout stream (and is, in fact, stocked with trout by the Utah Fish and Game Department) as it enters a series of drops and rapidly loses elevation. A twin 50-foot waterfall enhances the parklike aura of the canal.

REFERENCES

"Certificate of Appropriation of Water" Application #357A, Cert. #1233, B.I.A. Irrigation Office, Fort Duchesne, Utah.

File 43-245 #2403 (Colorado Park Irr. Co.)," State Engineers Office, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"Minute Book, 1916-1931," Ouray Valley Irrigation Company, Glenda Brown, Pelican Lake, Utah.